

HORROR

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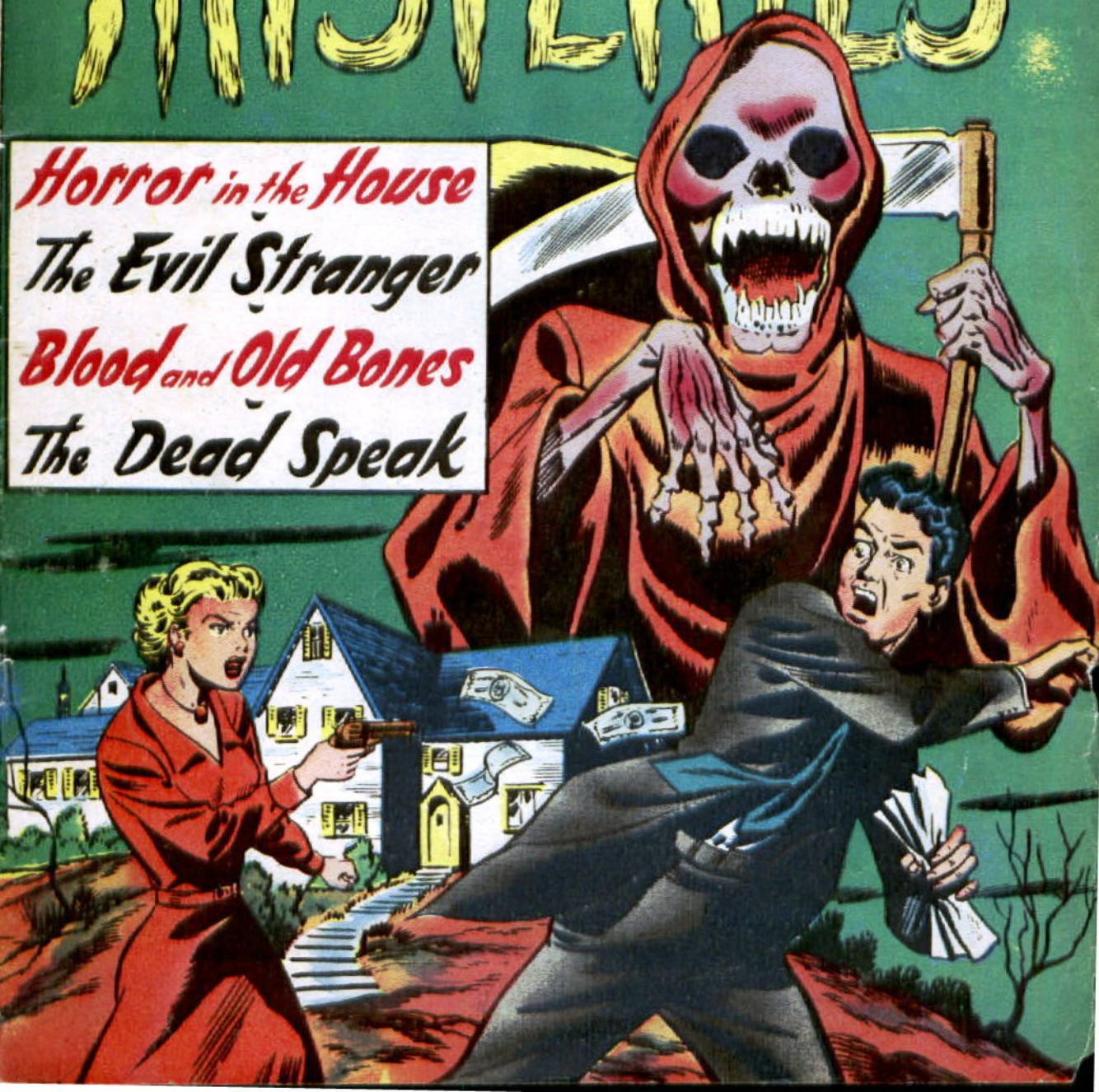
No. 14

ANC



STRANGE MYSTERIES

Horror in the House
The Evil Stranger
Blood and Old Bones
The Dead Speak





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Horror in the House

THE MANSION WAS OLD AND ROTTING — THE PRIMITIVE EMOTIONS WHICH FESTERED THERE WERE EVEN OLDER! FEAR, GREED, HATE — ALL MIXED IN ONE REVOLTING SALAD OF DESPAIR! AND IN THE END MURDER WOULD HAVE TRIUMPHED, HAD IT NOT BEEN FOR THE BLOODY CLUE...



SARAH GRIMM, SPINSTER, AN AGED RECEPTACLE FOR HATE AND A TERRIBLE GREED...

HE'S AT IT AGAIN, THE NASTY OLD MISER! I CAN HEAR THE COINS CLINKING!

SPIES ON HER UNCLE, WEALTHY ABNER GRIMM...

COUNTING HIS MONEY AS USUAL! IF ONLY HE WOULD HURRY UP AND DIE!



BUT HE'LL NEVER DIE! I'VE WAITED YEARS NOW TO GET HIS MONEY, BUT HE'LL LIVE FOREVER, UNLESS I DO SOMETHING!

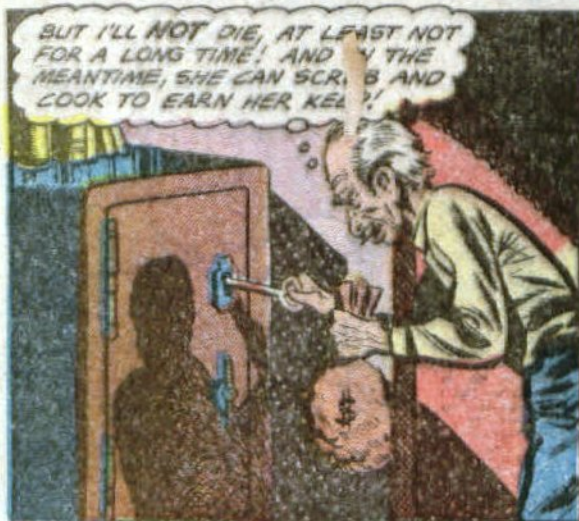
HEH! HEH! DEAR—UGH—SARAH THINKS I DON'T KNOW SHE'S WATCHING!

ALWAYS SPYING ON ME, ALWAYS HOPING I'LL DIE! SHE CAN HARDLY WAIT TO GET HER GRUBBY HANDS ON MY MONEY!



ABNER, LIKE MANY OLD MEN, HAS A HOBBY! HE IS A MICRO-ENGRAVER! AT THE MOMENT HE IS ENGRAVING SOMETHING ON THE HEAD OF A PIN...

BUT I'LL NOT DIE, AT LEAST NOT FOR A LONG TIME! AND IN THE MEANTIME, SHE CAN SCUB AND COOK TO EARN HER KEE!



HEH-HEH! PRETTY NEAT! WHEN I'M FINISHED, I'LL HAVE ALL OF LINCOLN'S GETTYSBURG ADDRESS ENGRAVED ON THE HEAD OF THIS PIN!

HE'S LOCKED HIS MONEY UP AGAIN! NOW HE'LL FOOL AROUND WITH THOSE SILLY ENGRAVING TOOLS WHILE I DO ALL THE WORK! I CAN'T STAND IT MUCH LONGER!





LOADED, TOO! AND IT'S OILED AND IN GOOD WORKING ORDER! HMM— IF ONLY I DARED— IF ONLY THERE WERE SOME WAY TO KILL HIM WITHOUT GETTING CAUGHT!

STILL LATER AS SHE THINKS OF A WAY...

DO YOU WANT TO SIGN THIS GROCERY LIST NOW, ABNER? YOU KNOW I CAN'T CHARGE THINGS AT THE STORE WITHOUT YOUR SIGNATURE!



BUT SARAH TEARS OFF THE UPPER PART OF THE LIST...



HAH—HAH! I'M GLAD NOW THAT HE'S SUCH A SKINFINT! HE'S— (CHUCKLE)— SIGNING HIS OWN DEATH WARRANT!

THERE YOU ARE, WOMAN! NOW HURRY AND FETCH THE GROCERIES!



SO ALL I NEED TO DO IS TYPE A NOTE ON THE SAME PAPER, ABOVE HIS NAME! WHO IS GOING TO SUSPECT THAT HE DIDN'T WRITE AND SIGN IT?

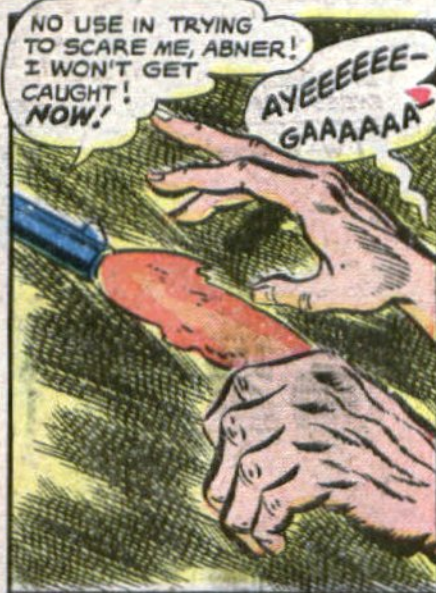


WHEN SHE IS FINISHED...

I am old and sick and tired, and so I'm taking the easy way out! I leave everything to my beloved niece, Sarah.

Abner Grimm







SO LATER... WELL, MISS GRIMM, I GUESS WE'RE FINISHED HERE! A CLEAR CASE OF SUICIDE! WE WON'T HAVE TO BOTHER YOU ANY LONGER!

T-THANK YOU! I WOULD LIKE TO REST! IT'S BEEN SUCH A TERRIBLE EXPERIENCE!



AND THERE YOU GO, OFF TO THE MORGUE, DEAR UNCLE! I GET YOUR MONEY AND NOBODY THE WISER! THAT NOTE REALLY CONVINCED THE POLICE!



THAT NIGHT A WILD STORM BLOWS UP, HOOTING AROUND THE OLD HOUSE IN A FRENZY OF WIND AND RAIN...

THIS IS AS GOOD A TIME AS ANY TO COUNT THE MONEY IN THE SAFE! NO ONE WILL BOTHER ME ON A NIGHT LIKE THIS!



BUT AS SARAH LOOTS THE SAFE, SHE SENSES SOMETHING BEHIND HER...

W-WHO IS IT? IS SOMEONE THERE? I-I HEARD A STRANGE NOISE!



SUDDENLY...

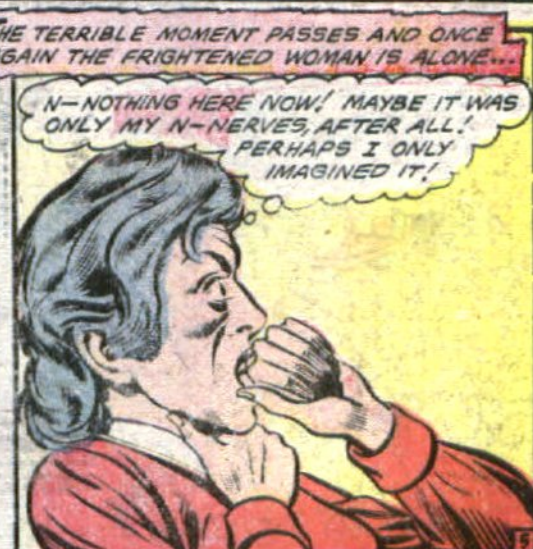
AHWOOOO-OOO- YOU WON'T GET AWAY WITH IT, SARAH! YOU'LL PAY FOR MURDERING ME! YOU'LL PAY!

ABNER'S GHOST! AAHHHHHHH-



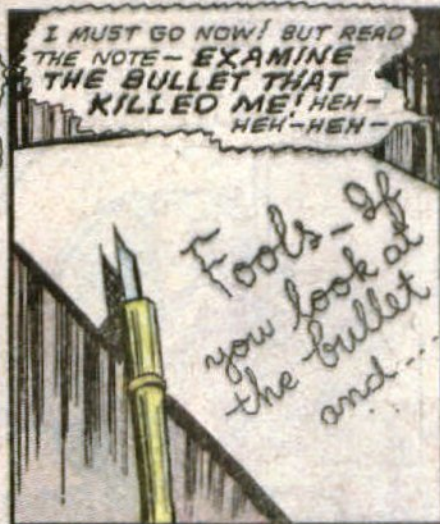
I-(CHUCKLE)- WON'T HARM YOU, BUT THEY WILL! THE POLICE WILL GET YOU! YOU'LL SEE! HEH-HEH-HEH!

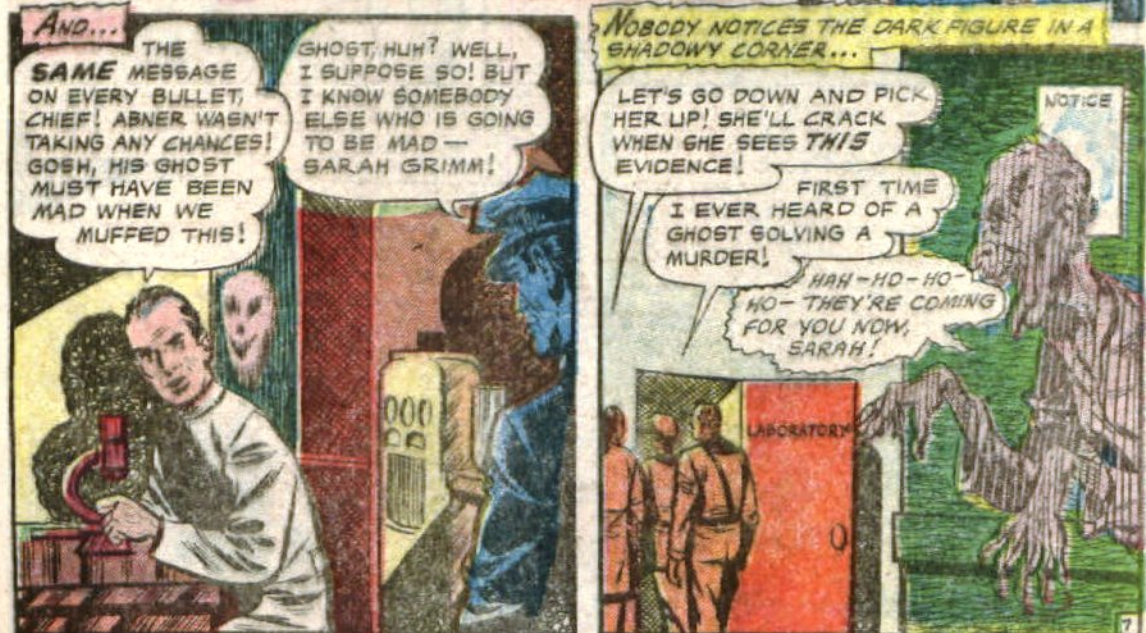
AAAAEEEEEEEEEE- G-GET AWAY! YOU'RE D-DEAD!



THE TERRIBLE MOMENT PASSES AND ONCE AGAIN THE FRIGHTENED WOMAN IS ALONE...

N-NOTHING HERE NOW! MAYBE IT WAS ONLY MY N-NERVES, AFTER ALL! PERHAPS I ONLY IMAGINED IT!

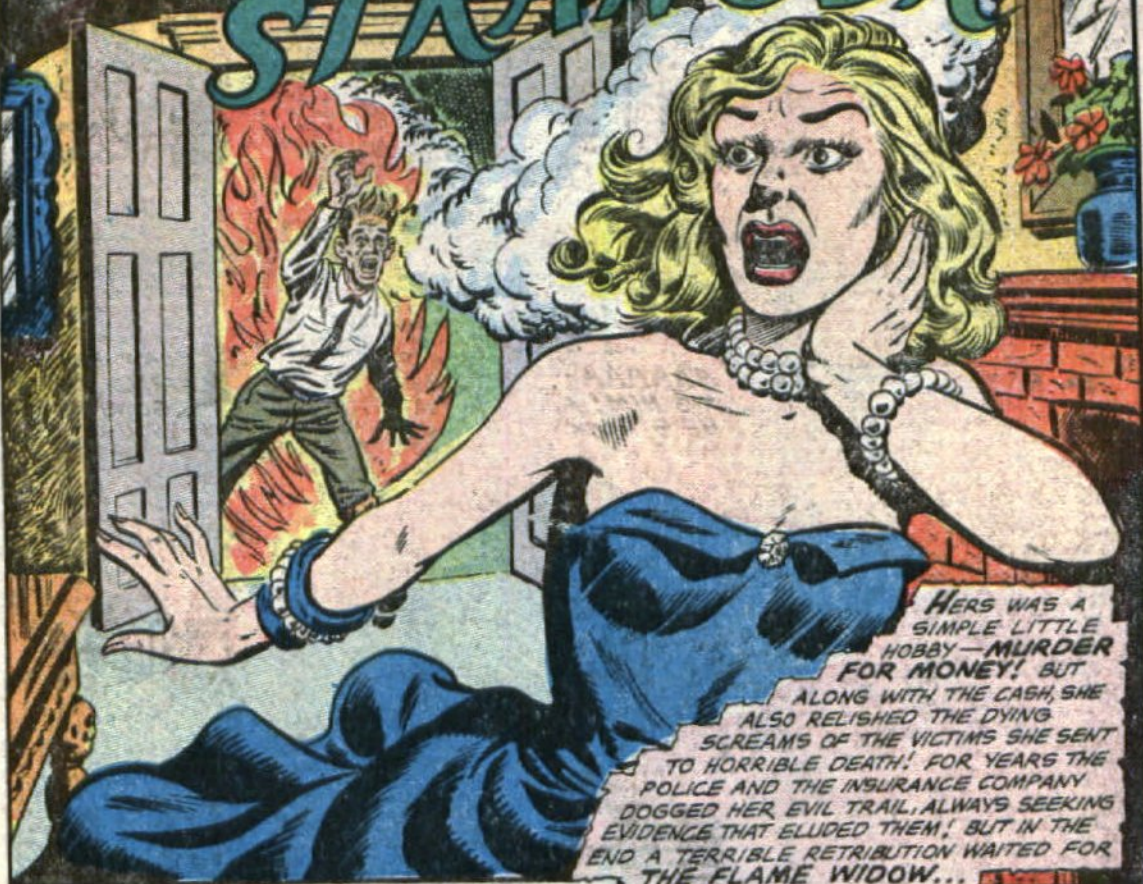




STRANGE MYSTERIES



The EVIL STRANGER



HERS WAS A SIMPLE LITTLE HOBBY—MURDER FOR MONEY! BUT ALONG WITH THE CASH, SHE ALSO RELISHED THE DYING SCREAMS OF THE VICTIMS SHE SENT TO HORRIBLE DEATH! FOR YEARS THE POLICE AND THE INSURANCE COMPANY DOGGED HER EVIL TRAIL, ALWAYS SEEKING EVIDENCE THAT ELUDED THEM! BUT IN THE END A TERRIBLE RETRIBUTION WAITED FOR THE FLAME WIDOW... **IS THERE II.**

IN A BOSTON INSURANCE OFFICE AN OFFICIAL CAREFULLY STUDIES REPORTS ON ONE—HELEN KAY...

"HMM—THIS REPORT SAYS WE'VE LOST TRACK OF THE KAY WOMAN AGAIN! SHE TOOK US FOR THOUSANDS, THEN DISAPPEARED! WELL, I SUPPOSE—(SIGH)—WE'LL JUST HAVE TO WAIT!"



SHE'LL TURN UP AGAIN UNDER A DIFFERENT NAME! BUT TO US SHE'LL ALWAYS BE THE FLAME WIDOW!



AT THAT MOMENT, IN A FAR DISTANT PLACE, THE FLAME WIDOW IS MAKING CERTAIN PLANS...

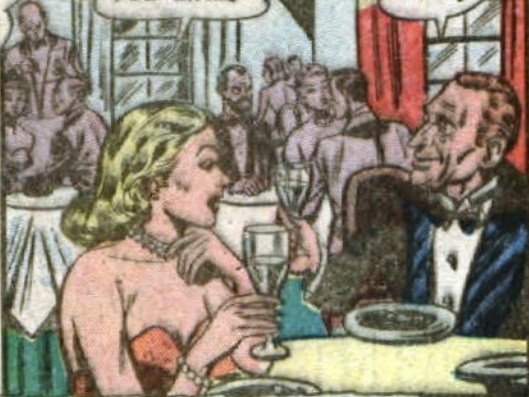


TIME FOR YOU TO GET MARRIED AGAIN, MY DEAR! THE BANK ACCOUNT IS GETTING AWFULLY LOW!

THAT NIGHT, HELEN KAY, NOW CALLING HERSELF HELEN KARNS, HAS A DATE WITH A WEALTHY MAN...

I'VE FINALLY DECIDED, JOHN! I WILL MARRY YOU — AS SOON AS YOU LIKE!

HELEN, DARLING! WE MUST DRINK TO THAT!



SO HER PLAN PROCEEDS AS ALWAYS...

AND SO, AS DEATH LOOKS ON AND CHUCKLES, THEY WERE MARRIED...



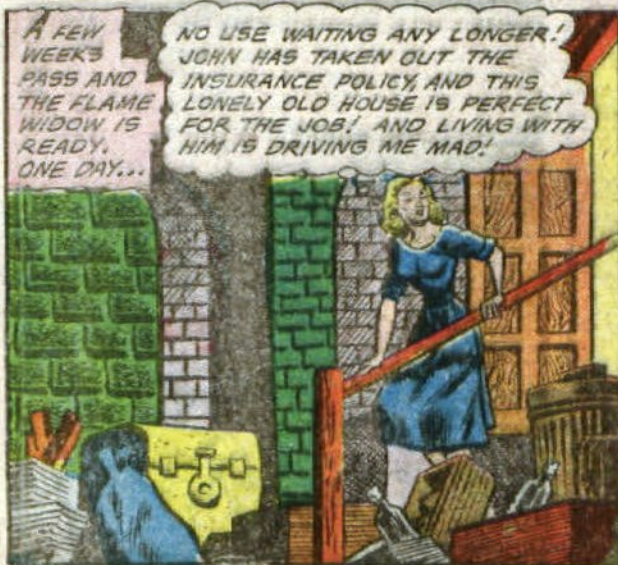
I LIKE THE PLACE, HELEN, BUT I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY YOU INSIST ON LIVING IN SUCH A DESOLATE SPOT AFTER WE'RE MARRIED!

I DON'T LIKE TO BE CROWDED, JOHN! I LIKE SPACE — LOTS OF IT!



YOU'RE MAKING ME A VERY HAPPY MAN, HELEN!

ENJOY IT WHILE YOU CAN, YOU OLD FOOL!



A FEW WEEKS PASS AND THE FLAME WIDOW IS READY, ONE DAY...

NO USE WAITING ANY LONGER! JOHN HAS TAKEN OUT THE INSURANCE POLICY, AND THIS LONELY OLD HOUSE IS PERFECT FOR THE JOB! AND LIVING WITH HIM IS DRIVING ME MAD!



I'LL ENJOY HEARING THE OLD FOOL SCREAM AS HE BURNS! ALMOST AS MUCH — (CHUCKLE) — AS I'LL ENJOY SPENDING THE MONEY!

STRANGE MYSTERIES



THAT NIGHT... EVERYTHING IS SET! JOHN IS SOUND ASLEEP AND I'M SUPPOSED TO BE STAYING IN TOWN FOR A LATE SHOW! I'D BETTER GET ON WITH IT!



I'VE ALREADY SEEN THE SHOW, SO THAT PART IS FOOL-PROOF! I'VE EVEN GOT MY TICKET STUB...



I'LL START THE FIRE AND GO BACK TO THE CAR! AND I'LL - HAH-HAH - ARRIVE JUST TOO LATE TO SAVE MY DEAR HUSBAND!

SUDDENLY, BEHIND HER...

HELEN! WHAT'S THE MEANING OF ALL THIS? THAT GASOLINE - THE MATCHES?

J - JOHN!



I SEE IT ALL NOW - YOU MURDERESS! YOU WERE GOING TO BURN ME ALIVE! LUCKY FOR ME I HAD INSOMNIA!

ALL RIGHT, YOU DODDERING OLD GOAT! SO NOW YOU KNOW!



SHE IS YOUNG, STRONG - AND VICIOUS! WITH A SNARL SHE HURLS THE GASOLINE AT HER ELDERLY HUSBAND...

HAH-HAH! I LIKE IT BETTER THIS WAY! NOW I CAN WATCH YOU BURN!

NO! D-DON'T! YOU'RE A F-FIEND!



ONE MATCH AND...

HEE-HEE! THAT WILL TAKE CARE OF YOU! GOODBYE!

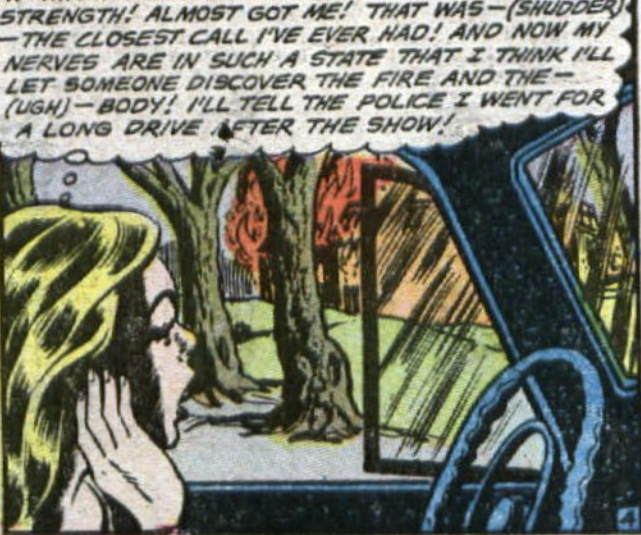
AAAYEEEEEEEEEE - OHNNNNNNNNNN -



THE FRENZIED SCREAMS OF THE DYING
MAN ARE TOO MUCH EVEN FOR THE
FLAME WIDOW...

BUT AS THE HOUSE CRUMBLES, SHE REGAINS
SOME OF HER NERVE...

W-WHO WOULD HAVE THOUGHT HE HAD SO MUCH
STRENGTH! ALMOST GOT ME! THAT WAS—(SHUDDER)—
THE CLOSEST CALL I'VE EVER HAD! AND NOW MY
NERVES ARE IN SUCH A STATE THAT I THINK I'LL
LET SOMEONE DISCOVER THE FIRE AND THE—
(UGH)—BODY! I'LL TELL THE POLICE I WENT FOR
A LONG DRIVE AFTER THE SHOW!



STRANGE MYSTERIES

IF THE POLICE AND THE INSURANCE COMPANY ARE SUSPICIOUS, THEY CAN PROVE NOTHING! BUT WEEKS PASS AND STILL SHE HAS NOT BEEN PAID...

ACME INSURANCE? THIS IS MRS. HOLMES! I WANT TO...

ABOUT YOUR CLAIM, MRS. HOLMES? WE ARE SENDING A MAN OVER TODAY!

HMM—THEY ARE SUSPICIOUS! WEEKS NOW SINCE THE FIRE AND STILL I HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO COLLECT! BUT WHAT CAN THEY PROVE? JUST THE SAME I MUST BE VERY CAREFUL!

LATER THAT DAY...

MRS. HOLMES? I'M W.R. TODD, FROM ACME INSURANCE! I HAVE A CHECK FOR YOU!

A CHECK! DO COME IN, MR. TODD!

THERE YOU ARE, MRS. HOLMES! FIFTY THOUSAND! SORRY WE WERE SO LONG, BUT THESE THINGS MUST BE INVESTIGATED, YOU KNOW!

HE'S CUTE! SO HANDSOME!

I UNDERSTAND, AND THANKS!

ONE THING LEADS TO ANOTHER AND SO, AS RICHARD TODD PREPARES TO LEAVE...

I FEEL AS THOUGH WE WERE ALREADY OLD FRIENDS—HELEN! I WONDER IF YOU—ER—WOULD GO OUT WITH ME THIS EVENING?

OF COURSE I WILL, PICK! I WAS HOPING YOU WOULD ASK ME! I'LL BE READY AT EIGHT!

MAYBE I'M A FOOL TO DATE AN INSURANCE MAN, BUT I LIKE HIM! AND THE COMPANY PAID ME, SO THEY PROBABLY WEREN'T AS SUSPICIOUS AS I THOUGHT! BESIDES IT WILL BE FUN TO GO OUT WITH A YOUNG AND HANDSOME MAN AGAIN!

AS THE EVENING PROGRESSES, HELEN FINDS HERSELF LIKING DICK TODD MORE AND MORE! THERE IS JUST ONE THING...

YOU KNOW, PICK, I HAVE THE STRANGEST FEELING THAT I'VE MET YOU SOMEWHERE BEFORE!

COULDN'T BE, HONEY! I'D NEVER FORGET YOU!

AND SO THEY ALSO WERE MARRIED! BUT THIS TIME THE FLAME WIDOW HAD GOOD INTENTIONS—AT LEAST AT FIRST...

JUST THINK, DARLING! ONLY SIX WEEKS AGO WE WERE STRANGERS!

I'M SO HAPPY, DICK!



FOR A TIME SHE IS HAPPY—THEN ONE NIGHT SHE FINDS HERSELF THINKING THE OLD THOUGHTS...

HMM—ALL OF A SUDDEN I'M TIRED OF HIM! AND AS AN INSURANCE MAN, HE'S BEEN VERY CAREFUL TO TAKE OUT A LOT OF INSURANCE!

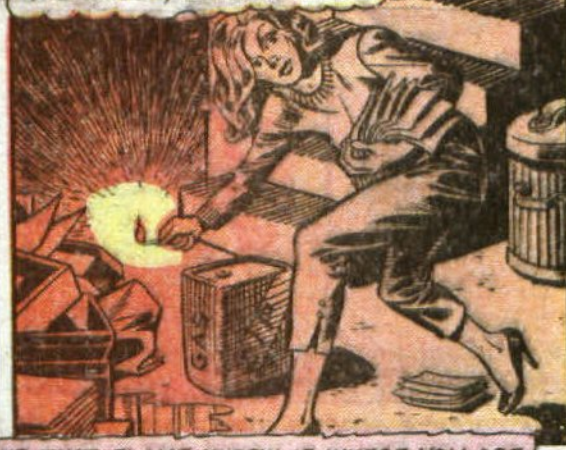


LATER... THESE POLICIES ARE ALL MADE OUT TO ME! WHAT A—(CHUCKLE)—JOKE IT WILL BE! SAFE, TOO! WHO IS GOING TO SUSPECT THE WIFE OF AN INSURANCE MAN OF BURNING HIM?



SO ONE NIGHT...

THOSE SLEEPING PILLS I PUT IN HIS COFFEE OUGHT TO KEEP HIM OUT UNTIL THE FLAMES GET HIM! I'LL WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE, THEN RUN OUT OF THE HOUSE, SCREAMING...



ONLY ONE REGRET—I NEVER DID FIND OUT WHERE I'D MET DICK BEFORE, OR WHY THERE WAS SOMETHING SO FAMILIAR ABOUT HIM! I'LL NEVER KNOW NOW!



AND THAT, FLAME WIDOW, IS WHERE YOU ARE SO WRONG...

HELLO, HELEN! UP TO YOUR SAME MURDEROUS TRICKS, I SEE!

DICK! B-BUT YOUR VOICE! Y-YOU—I'VE HEARD THAT VOICE BEFORE! YOU'RE NOT DICK TODD—YOU'RE JOHN HOLMES!



STRANGE MYSTERIES



RIGHT! I **AM** JOHN HOLMES—THE HUSBAND YOU TRIED TO MURDER! BUT I ESCAPED THAT NIGHT—AND THEY MADE ME A **NEW FACE** OF WAX AND PLASTIC! A **YOUNG FACE!**

N-NO! IT'S IMPOSSIBLE!



THE POLICE AGREED TO LET ME PUNISH YOU MY OWN WAY! SO I GAVE YOU THE INSURANCE MONEY AND MARRIED YOU **AGAIN!** HAH-HAH! **AAAAA—MY F-FACE!**

Y-YOU! SO THAT'S WHY YOU WERE FAMILIAR!



SUDDENLY...

EEEEEEEEEE—YOUR FACE—IT'S HORRIBLE! IT'S ALL COMING APART!

THE HEAT! MY FACE IS MELTING!



BUT NOW I'LL GET **YOU—FLAME WIDOW!**



THIS TIME WE'LL BURN TOGETHER! JUST YOU AND ME!

NO—LET ME OUT!

AAAAHHHH—

THE SCREAMS THAT CAME FROM THE BLAZING HOUSE WERE SO HORRIBLE THAT EVEN HARDENED FIREMEN WERE SICK WITH FEAR...



AYEEEEEEEE—YAAAAAA—

OHAAAAA—AAAAA—

BUT DEATH, CHUCKLING TO HIMSELF, HAD THE LAST WORD...



HEE—HEE—HEE—HEE—HEE—

CLOSED

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HAUNTED HANDS

By JOHN MARTIN

IN THE library of the great house the stillness was broken by only two things—the loud ticking of a grandfather's clock and Rick Tenby's labored breathing.

He glared at his mother and brought a fist crashing down on the great library table.

"What do you mean by saying you won't attend the wedding? How do you think it's going to look if my own mother doesn't show up when Merry and I are married?"

Mrs. Tenby stared at him in stony silence. A look of fear flickered finally in her eyes.

"I can't, Rick! I can't!" Abruptly her reserve broke down. Hot tears streamed down her face. "Not on top of your father's death. It was too shameful, Rick. I couldn't face all those people!"

"But, mother, that was two months ago. You can't mourn forever!" Rick shouted.

Mrs. Tenby's mouth hardened suddenly into a thin line.

"He was a suicide, son," she said. "You found him dead yourself, in the car!"

"Suicide, nothing!" Rick stormed. "He'd been strangled!"

"In a car locked from the inside, inside a locked garage?" she asked softly. "Dick, let's not discuss it!"

"We've got to!" he said hoarsely. "Ever since I was a boy I've lived with mystery in this house, some hideous thing about father that blighted your life and his—and mine! I've never been told what it was . . ." He broke off, then resumed. "I'll never forget the moment I found him, nothing that could have killed him near, not even a rope!"

"Rick, please!"

"Not even a rope!" he repeated. "It was almost as if something evil, something neither flesh nor blood, came through those locked doors to murder him!" He stood up and faced her. "Mother, you've got to tell me what was wrong in Dad's life. This mystery has driven me crazy—and I'm not going to marry Merry with unclean hands. If it was insanity . . ."

"It wasn't insanity," his mother interrupted. She rose and went to the door.

"Alright, Rick, I'll tell you. But not now! I've got to drive into town, get some money from the bank. And Rick . . ." She paused for a moment, her eyes tragic. "I made only one promise. I'll clear up the mystery, no matter how much it may hurt you—as it will."

"Mother—be careful!" Rick called as she left. "You haven't driven since Dad died!"

"I'll be careful son," she said. Then she was gone.

RICK sank morosely into a chair, moping.

The mystery surrounding his father's income had always been a closely guarded family secret. He remembered the guarded, sarcastic smiles of the wealthier people of the town, as a boy.

Abruptly he stirred, conscious of not hearing the car motor burst into life. Idly he got up, wandered out to the garage. He knew his mother must be there—a good ten minutes had elapsed and still he could see the bonnet of the car through the glass doors of the garage. He peered through the windows.

"Good God!" The cry was wrung from him. Instantly he was battering at the doors. With a shattering crash, they swung in.

In the front seat of the car lay his mother. She had been strangled. Around her neck were the marks of bruising fingers. Tearing out his own car keys he opened the car door. There was nothing mysterious about why the car was locked. Any sensible car driver always locked the doors from inside so as to prevent them opening on pressure. That had been true, doubtless, when his father had climbed into the car on the day he died. And the garage doors being locked from inside meant nothing, either, for they were opened automatically as the car backed out of the garage, its rear wheels pressing down a special cable.

Rick stared down in horror at the dead body of his mother. It was not anything inside the locked garage that bothered him. But he knew that nothing solid, nothing of blood, flesh, bone could possibly have entered.

To have entered, to have murdered, a thing would have to be insubstantial, ghost-like . . .

"I—I musn't talk like this," he muttered. "If I do I'll go mad. Ghosts! Spirits! Nonsense!" With an effort he kept back his tears, then went for the police.

THAT night Merry Meredith came to see him. In the library she pressed him back into a chair.

"Darling, you've got to relax," she insisted. "I know what you've gone through, but if you've got to get a grip on yourself, start now!"

He stared at her numbly.

"The police . . ."

"They've called it suicide, Rick! There's no other explanation. You know that as well as I do!"

Rick nodded.

"We'll have to postpone the wedding until after the funeral. But after that . . . darling!" he said with sudden fierceness. "Let's elope!" He looked at her appealingly.

She hugged him and nodded.

"Of course, sweetheart! I'm going now. You get some rest. And remember, whatever has happened, whatever will happen, I'm at your side!" Moments later she had gone.

He went through the funeral like a man dazed. Unexplained mystery hedged him in like a wall.

On Friday night of the third week following the funeral, he and Merry eloped. He drove the car round to the driveway of her father's house. She was waiting.

"We'd better be pretty quiet," he said.

"Oh, don't be silly, darling," she remonstrated. "Mom and Dad know all about it. They understand!" She peered upward at the sky. "It's the weather I'm worrying about!"

He had thought his spirits would rise after they left the Justice of the Peace who married them, but they sank like lead on the road to the honeymoon hotel. At midnight a thin screen of snow began to fall in front of the car. It became thicker by the moment. He became paralyzed with terror at the thought of being snowbound in his car, the car that had witnessed the deaths of both his parents. Finally, at a bend in the road, the car plowed into a snowbank and stopped.

"I'll have to get out and dig us free," he said, with an attempt at gaiety. "There's a shovel in the trunk." He reached into the glove compartment, remembering a pair of heavy leather gloves belonging to his father.

They were still there, in a welter of maps, papers and small tools. Swiftly, he put them on; the snow was piling up at an alarmingly rapid rate. Around him, now, the car seemed suddenly a prison, a prison he must break out of. He put out a hand to open the door, but the hand swerved. His blood froze suddenly. Now he felt his hands working back and forth like tentacles, the fingers writhing. Through his mind shot a red-hot stab of hatred. He turned toward Merry, trembling, shuddering.

"D-D-Darling . . . what—what's wrong?" she stammered.

LIKE SNAKES his hands jerked forward abruptly, crawling toward her throat. Merry's scream rang through the car like an echo of doom. Through the haze of hate clouding his eyes, he saw his hands go round her throat; she tried to pull away, but they held inexorably, pressing, twisting. In the close, confined space he heard himself laugh fiendishly.

Then it was over. Her body dropped away from him, dead. The hot hatred lessened a bit. Her body fell sidewise, against the glove compartment. It sprang open and a wallet fell out. Numbly, not knowing what he was doing he bent, picked it up. His father's! A shock went through him. Perhaps in here lay the secret that had been denied him, the secret of his sudden madness. Wildly, he pawed through the compartments, stopped at one card. It was official stamped—a pass. He examined it more closely. Then he burst into wild, mad laughter. Now he knew why his family had been shunned, why his parents had never told him where the family income had come from. The card was a pass to the State Prison. His father had been State's Executioner. But the gloves, his hands of death . . .

He saw his hands come alive, independent of his own will. It was the gloves, he knew, the thick gloves his father had worn as he threw the switch of the electric chair, the gloves that had absorbed the deadly, revengeful hatred of the criminals his father had executed, killed his father, his mother, Merry — and now, *himself*! They had triumphed in vengeance!

With hideous strength his own hands fastened round his throat, contracted. With a snap his head fell to one side. The car was quiet, now, with its cargo of two corpses; quiet until a rustle broke the silence. The rustle of the gloves unfolding, climbing like spiders back to their compartment, ready for the next burst of revenge!

Blood and Old Bones

IF EVER A MAN DUG HIS OWN GRAVE, IT WAS LUTHER HUNT! TO MAKE IT WORSE HE HAD TO DESECRATE OLD GRAVES TO MAKE ROOM FOR THE NEW ONE! HE FORGOT THAT IF OIL IS WHERE YOU FIND IT, SO IS DEATH! AND TO MAKE MONEY HE DEFIED NOT ONLY THE LIVING, BUT THE DEAD AS WELL! BUT MONEY IS NO GOOD TO A MADMAN, AND THAT'S WHAT LUTHER WAS AFTER HE HEARD THE SCREAMING GRAVES...



A DANK AND STORMY NIGHT! TWO MEN INSPECT A GRAVEYARD...

A ROTTEN BREAK, DENNY! OF ALL PLACES TO FIND OIL—UNDER A MARBLE ORCHARD!

BRR—DON'T TALK LIKE THAT, MR. HUNT! IT AIN'T RESPECTFUL!

RESPECTFUL, MY EYE! WHO CARES ABOUT A LOT OF STIFFS! I TELL YOU I'M GONNA GET THAT OIL, SOME WAY OR OTHER! ANYWAY THEY DON'T EVEN USE THIS PLACE NOW!

JUST THE SAME THE TOWNS-PEOPLE WON'T LET YOU DRILL HERE!

BUT LUTHER HUNT FINDS A WAY...

FRANKLY, MR. HUNT, I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY ANYBODY WOULD WANT TO BUY AN OLD ABANDONED CEMETERY...

I KNOW IT SOUNDS A LITTLE STRANGE, BUT I'M A VERY SICK MAN! I'M ALSO A SCHOLAR, AN EXPERT IN PSYCHIC RESEARCH! THIS WAY I HAVE QUIET AND DO MY WORK, TOO!

IT WOULD BE HARD TO FIND A QUIETER PLACE THAN A GRAVEYARD, EH? AND MAYBE I CAN RAISE A FEW GHOSTS!

I—(CHUCKLE)—WILL, BUT NOT THE WAY HE THINKS!



SO...

OKAY, I'LL SIGN THE LEASE NOW! FOR A YEAR, AND IT'S AIR-TIGHT! I'LL GIVE YOU A CHECK IMMEDIATELY!

I, ER, DON'T SEE WHY NOT! IF YOU WANT TO LIVE IN A CEMETERY, IT'S YOUR BUSINESS! AND THE TOWN CAN USE THE MONEY!

A FEW DAYS LATER...

WHAT'S HOLDING US UP, DENNY? LET'S GET STARTED! WE SHOULD HAVE A DRILLING SITE LEVELED IN A COUPLE OF DAYS!

G-GEE, BOSS! I DON'T LIKE THIS! THE OTHER MEN DON'T, EITHER! THERE'S GONNA BE HECK TO PAY!



YOU'RE ALL A BUNCH OF WEAK-KNEED SLOBS! START THAT SHOVEL, YOU! RIGHT NOW! RIP UP THOSE OLD GRAVES!

Y-YES, SIR!

THE STEEL MAW BITES DEEP AND COMES UP WITH A GRISLY LOAD OF ANCIENT YELLOWED SKULLS AND DRY BONES...

UGH—I'VE HAD JOBS I LIKED BETTER!



STRANGE MYSTERIES



AND SOON...

SEE, NOTHING HAS HAPPENED YET! THE LOCAL YOKELS ARE COMPLAINING, BUT THEY CAN'T DO A THING!

I STILL DON'T LIKE IT! NEVER SAW SO MANY OLD BONES IN MY LIFE!



WHILE NEARBY...

FOOLS! THEY DARE TO DO THIS! MY DEAR WIFE, AMY, WAS LAID TO REST THERE NIGH FIFTY YEARS AGO!

THE TOWN CALLS ME CRAZY BEN! HAH—AT LEAST I'M NOT CRAZY ENOUGH TO LET THESE MONEY-CRAZY STRANGERS GET AWAY WITH THIS! I'LL STOP THEM!

THAT NIGHT A STORM BLOWS UP! IN THE CONSTRUCTION SHACK...

LISTEN TO THAT WIND HOWL! UGH—GETS ON MY NERVES! AND WHEN I THINK OF THOSE CORPSES!

C'MON AND PLAY! YOU'RE WORSE THAN AN OLD MAID! DON'T YOU KNOW THAT OLD BONES CAN'T HURT YA!



I TELL YOU, BOSS, THERE'S SOMETHING OUT THERE! I HEARD IT! LIKE SOMETHING P-PROWLING AROUND!

HAH-HAH! YOUR NERVES ARE REALLY SHOT! GO AND LOOK, FOR PETE'S SAKE, SO WE CAN FINISH THE GAME!



AND...

F-FUNNY! I DON'T HEAR OR SEE ANYTHING NOW! BUT I COULD HAVE SWORN...

SUDDENLY...

I'VE, YOU WHO DEFILE GRAVES! HEH-HEH! OLD CRAZY BEN WILL GET EVEN WITH YOU! HEE-HEE-HEE-

YAAAAAEEEEEE-





STRANGE MYSTERIES



THIS IS A—(SHUDDER)—MESSY JOB, BUT I'VE GOT TO DO IT! ONCE I'VE SMASHED THE BODIES TO PULP WITH THIS BULLDOZER...



...I'LL SHOVE THEM INTO THE PILE WITH THE OTHERS! NOBODY CAN TELL THEIR BONES FROM THE OLDER ONES!



THERE! I'M SAFE NOW! B-BUT I'LL SURE BE GLAD WHEN THIS WELL COMES IN!



SEVERAL DAYS PASS...

DRILLING AT LAST! AND NO TROUBLE ABOUT DENNY AND THE OLD MAN YET! LOOKS LIKE I GOT AWAY WITH IT CLEAN! BUT NOW I'VE GOT TO HIT OIL—OIL!

NO SIGNS YET, BOSS!

THEN IT HAPPENS...

YOWWW—YOU H-HEAR THAT? THOSE AWFUL SOUNDS—COMING FROM THE WELL!

GAA—AND THIS IS A G-GRAVEYARD!

BROTHER! I QUIT!

ME, TOO!

COME BACK, YOU FOOLS! SURELY YOU DON'T BELIEVE IN GHOSTS!

BUT EVEN HUNT IS SHAKEN...

H-HUH! IT IS A HORRIBLE SOUND AND I DON'T LIKE IT! BUT I'M NOT GIVING UP!





The DEAD SPEAK!

THEY ASKED A TERRIBLE QUESTION — AND FROM THE GRAVE ITSELF CAME THE HORRIBLE ANSWER! YES! THE DEAD CAN RETURN! BUT TOO LATE THE SEEKERS LEARNED THE PENALTY MERE MEN MUST PAY FOR KNOWLEDGE — WHICH IS SACRED TO THE DEVIL! PRAY THAT YOU NEVER HEAR A VOICE FROM A GRAVE...



A STORM HOWLS LIKE A MAD WOLF AS MALCOLM REETE AND LYNN DEEVERS ENTER A GRAVEYARD...

WE MUST HURRY, LYNN! IF THEY CATCH US, IT WON'T BE PLEASANT!

THAT'S THE TROUBLE WITH BEING OUTSIDE THE LAW!

BAH! WHO CARES ABOUT THE LAW! WE'RE REAL SCIENTISTS, NOT A LOT OF TAME SHEEP! IF THEY WON'T GIVE US BODIES, WE'LL STEAL THEM!

I SURE HOPE THE FORMULA WORKS THIS TIME!



STRANGE MYSTERIES



MINUTES LATER...

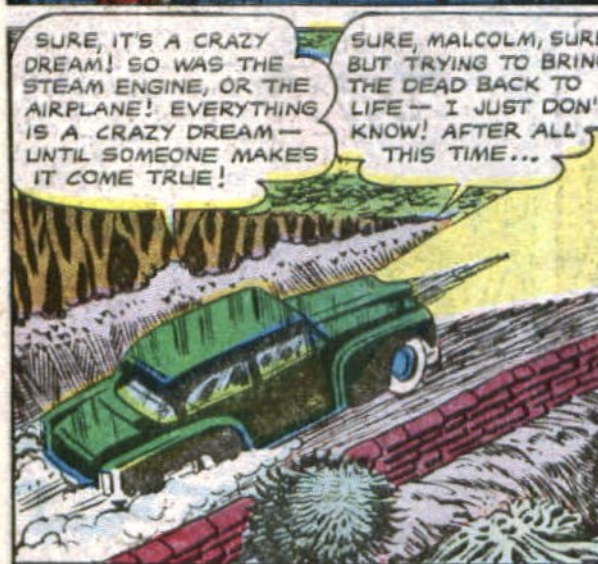
LOOKS LIKE A GOOD ONE! THE FLESH IS IN AN ADVANCED STATE OF DECAY, BUT THE ORGANS ARE PROBABLY INTACT!

UGH! LET'S GET OUT OF HERE! AND IF IT DON'T WORK THIS TIME, I'M FOR GIVING UP!



YOU ARE A FOOL, LYNN! TEN YEARS WE'VE WORKED, ALWAYS GETTING CLOSER, AND NOW YOU TALK ABOUT QUITTING!

I KNOW! BUT MY NERVES ARE GOING BAD! AND WELL, MAYBE IT'S ONLY A CRAZY DREAM!



SURE, IT'S A CRAZY DREAM! SO WAS THE STEAM ENGINE, OR THE AIRPLANE! EVERYTHING IS A CRAZY DREAM—UNTIL SOMEONE MAKES IT COME TRUE!

SURE, MALCOLM, SURE! BUT TRYING TO BRING THE DEAD BACK TO LIFE—I JUST DON'T KNOW! AFTER ALL THIS TIME...



BUT WE'RE CLOSE, I TELL YOU! SO CLOSE! A LITTLE MORE HARD WORK, AND A LITTLE LUCK, AND WE'LL DO IT!

I HOPE YOU'RE RIGHT! WE'VE TRIED AT LEAST A THOUSAND DIFFERENT FORMULAS!



INSIDE THE DESOLATE LABORATORY, THE WORK BEGINS AGAIN...

MY WORD, LYNN, THIS FELLOW IS A LITTLE FARTHER GONE THAN I THOUGHT! BUT LET ME HAVE A C.C. OF THE FORMULA!

YOU PICKED THE GRAVE, NOT ME! AND IT WAS SO BLASTED DARK!



ONLY TO END IN FAILURE...

NO REACTION! ABSOLUTELY NONE! EVEN THE ELECTRIC CURRENT WON'T PRODUCE MUSCULAR SPASM! WE MUST TRY AGAIN, LYNN!

BLAST IT! I SAID I'D QUIT, BUT OF COURSE I WON'T! WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

DAYS PASS! ONE NIGHT AS MALCOLM REETE WAITS FOR HIS PARTNER TO RETURN...

WHAT CAN BE KEEPING HIM? HE ONLY WENT INTO THE VILLAGE FOR— OH, HERE HE COMES NOW! AND HE'S GOT A BODY IN THE CAR!



A STROKE OF LUCK! I WAS PASSING A GRAVEYARD JUST AS THE FUNERAL PARTY WAS LEAVING! THERE WAS NO ONE AROUND, SO...

YOU TOOK AN AWFUL CHANCE!



BUT MAYBE THIS IS THE ONE! THE CORPSE IS CERTAINLY FRESH!

YES! SOME TRAMP, I THINK! BURIED IN THE COUNTY PLOT, IN THE CLOTHES HE DIED IN!



AN INJECTION IS MADE! AND ALMOST INSTANTLY...

LOOK! HIS EYES ARE OPEN! WE'VE DONE IT AT LAST!

HE'S MOVING! T-TRYING TO SAY SOMETHING!

UHHHHHHH— WHERE? WHA—



THE MAN, WHO A MOMENT BEFORE WAS A CORPSE, STAGGERS WILDLY ABOUT THE ROOM...

AAA—I—UH— OHHHHHHHHHH—

BE CAREFUL, LYNN! STAY AWAY FROM HIM!

HE'S HARMLESS ENOUGH! ONLY WHAT DO WE DO WITH HIM NOW?



HEY! HAVE YOU GONE CRAZY? AFTER ALL OUR WORK...

WE DON'T NEED HIM ANY LONGER, NOW THAT WE KNOW THE FORMULA WORKS! AND IT STILL NEEDS PERFECTING!

LATER WE'LL PUT HIM BACK IN HIS GRAVE! THE NEXT TIME WE'LL CHOOSE OUR CORPSE MORE CAREFULLY, AND WORK UNDER BETTER CONDITIONS!

I DON'T GET IT! MAYBE HE WASN'T THE PERFECT SUBJECT, BUT AT LEAST HE WAS ALIVE!



STRANGE MYSTERIES

BUT REETE HAS PLANS THAT DEEVERS DOES NOT KNOW ABOUT! SEVERAL DAYS LATER...

ABOUT TIME WE DROVE INTO THE VILLAGE FOR SUPPLIES! WE NEED SOME MORE OF THAT ARSENIC SALTS!

THE PHARMACY WILL HAVE IT! YOU DRIVE, LYNN!

AND WE BETTER BE LOOKING FOR ANOTHER BODY! THE FORMULA IS AS NEAR PERFECT AS WE CAN MAKE IT! I DON'T SEE WHAT WE'VE BEEN WAITING FOR!

FOR THIS, MY DEAR COLLEAGUE!

I SEE NO USE IN SHARING THE GLORY, OR THE CASH WITH YOU! ANYWAY YOU'RE A BUNGLER, AND SOONER OR LATER YOU WOULD HAVE GOTTEN US INTO TROUBLE! SO...

AAAAEEEEEE—
LYNNNNNNNN!

FUNNY, LYNN! I NEVER REALLY KNEW MUCH ABOUT YOU IN LIFE, AND I STILL DON'T! WHERE YOU C'ME FROM, WHO YOU REALLY WERE— BUT WHO CARES NOW! I'M SURE NO ONE WILL EVER MISS YOU!

LATER, ON A DESOLATE MOUNTAIN ROAD...

GOODBYE! OVER YOU GO, AND IT WILL LOOK LIKE JUST ANOTHER REGRETTABLE ACCIDENT! TOO BAD THAT I — (CHUCKLE) — CAN'T USE YOUR BODY FOR MY NEW EXPERIMENTS, BUT...

I DON'T WANT YOU COMING BACK TO LIFE, DO I? THAT WOULD BE MOST EMBARRASSING!





NEXT DAY... I'VE SHIPPED MY EQUIPMENT AHEAD, AND NOW I'LL PUT THE WHOLE CONTINENT BETWEEN ME AND THE OLD LAB! AT LAST I'LL BE ABLE TO WORK ALONE AND IN PEACE!



NOT A WORD FROM THE POLICE ABOUT THE — HAH-HAH — ACCIDENT! EITHER THEY HAVEN'T FOUND LYNN'S BODY YET, OR THEY HAVEN'T CONNECTED US! I WAS CLEVER TO REMOVE ALL POSSIBLE IDENTIFICATION FROM HIM AND THE CAR...



HE NEVER TALKED ABOUT HIS PAST! NEVER EVEN TOLD ME WHERE HE GOT HIS TRAINING! MAYBE HE WAS SOME SORT OF CROOK AFTER ALL! WELL, THAT'S ALL BEHIND ME!



IN HIS NEW HOME, MALCOLM REETE FORGETS ABOUT HIS MURDERED PARTNER AND SETTLES DOWN TO WORK...

GOOD! THIS BLUE VITRIOL IS AN IMPROVEMENT OVER THE ARSENIC SALTS! I'M GRADUALLY WORKING OUT AN ENTIRELY NEW APPROACH TO THE PROBLEM!



LIKE THE GHOUL HE IS, REETE JOINS THE BORROWING THROWS AROUND A COFFIN...

EASY AS CAN BE! THEY THINK I'VE COME TO PAY MY RESPECTS TO THE DEAD! AND IN A — (CHUCKLE) — WAY I HAVE!



FINALLY HE GOES HUNTING...

THERE'S A FUNERAL HOME NOW! MAYBE, IF I GO IN AND LOOK AROUND, I'LL BE ABLE TO GET A LEAD — THIS TIME THE BODY MUST BE JUST RIGHT!

A GIRL! LOVELY, TOO! FROM THE LOOKS OF HER, AND THE SIZE OF THIS FUNERAL, SHE WAS SOMEONE IMPORTANT! MEANING THAT IF I CAN BRING HER BACK TO LIFE, I'LL MAKE MY NAME AND A LOT OF MONEY AT THE SAME TIME!



THERE! NOW THE FORMULA WILL SPREAD AND SOAK INTO THE GRAVE, MIXING WITH WATER AND EARTH! SINCE IT PENETRATES EVEN METAL, THERE WILL BE NO DIFFICULTY ABOUT THE COFFIN! THE TISSUES IN THE CORPSE WILL COME TO LIFE AGAIN!



NOTHING TO DO NOW BUT GO HOME AND WAIT A FEW HOURS! I'LL COME BACK JUST BEFORE DAWN AND OPEN THE COFFIN!



A GATE RASPS HARSHLY BEHIND MALCOLM REETE, THEN THERE IS SILENCE! THE STORM MOANS SOFTLY, BUT EVEN IT SEEMS TO BE WAITING FOR SOMETHING! THEN THE EARTH STIRS AS IF IN PAIN...



AND FROM THE NEW GRAVE COMES A TERRIBLE SOUND...

AAAAHHH—I—I LIVE AGAIN! I WAS DEAD, BURIED, BUT I LIVE!



AND... I REMEMBER NOW! I WAS GETTING IN THE CAR, AND HE, MALCOLM, WAS BEHIND ME! I REMEMBER THE PAIN EXPLODING IN MY HEAD, THEN ONLY BLACKNESS...



...UNTIL NOW! BUT THIS PLACE—I REMEMBER IT, TOO! I WAS BORN NEAR HERE! I PLAYED IN THIS OLD GRAVEYARD WHEN I WAS A CHILD!



THERE'S ONLY ONE ANSWER! THEY MUST HAVE IDENTIFIED ME AND SHIPPED ME HOME FOR BURIAL! AND—HEH-HEH—SOMEHOW MALCOLM HAS BROUGHT ME TO LIFE AGAIN! IT MUST BE HIS WORK! AND HE MUST BE CLOSE-BY! I KNOW HIS HABITS!





AND NOT FAR AWAY...

ALMOST TIME TO GO BACK
AND OPEN THE GIRL'S GRAVE!
HOW AMAZED SHE'S GOING
TO BE!



HE DOES NOT SEE THE GHASTLY
FACE AT THE WINDOW...

IT IS MALCOLM! I—I DON'T UNDER-
STAND ANY OF THIS, EXCEPT THAT AT
LAST I KNOW THERE IS JUSTICE IN THE
WORLD! JUSTICE—AND REVENGE!



A DEATHLY, HOLLOW KNOCKING...

BLAST! WHO CAN THAT BE?
I'M CERTAINLY NOT EXPECTING
VISITORS AT THIS HOUR! BETTER
LOOK FIRST!



MALCOLM REETE PEERS THROUGH THE
SMEARED GLASS — AND SCREAMS...

YIIIIIIIIIIII — IT-IT'S LYNN!
COME OUT OF HIS GRAVE!



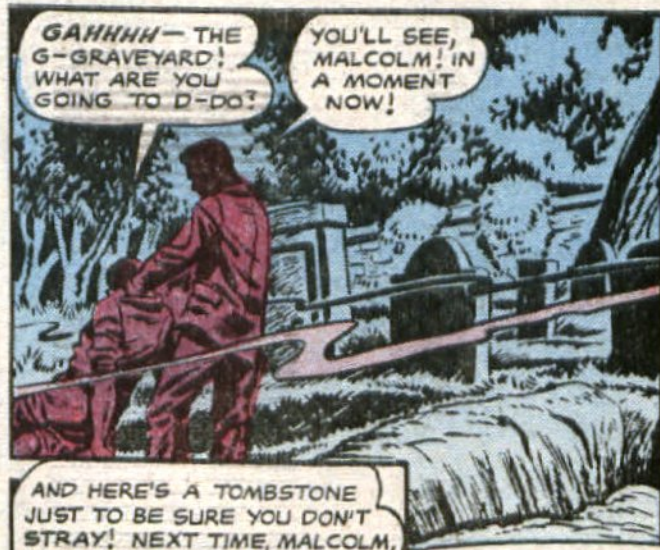
OPEN THE DOOR, MALCOLM!
HEE-HEE-HEE! YOU CAN'T
GET AWAY FROM ME!
HAH-HAH-HAH!

AAAYOWW—



UGHN! GOT YOU
NOW, MY OLD FRIEND!
AND THANKS FOR
BRINGING ME BACK
TO LIFE! THOUGH
I DON'T KNOW
WHY YOU DID
IT!

I—I DIDN'T! I
POURED THE
FORMULA ON THE
GIRL'S GRAVE!
YOWWWW—I
KNOW! I GOT THE
WRONG GRAVE!



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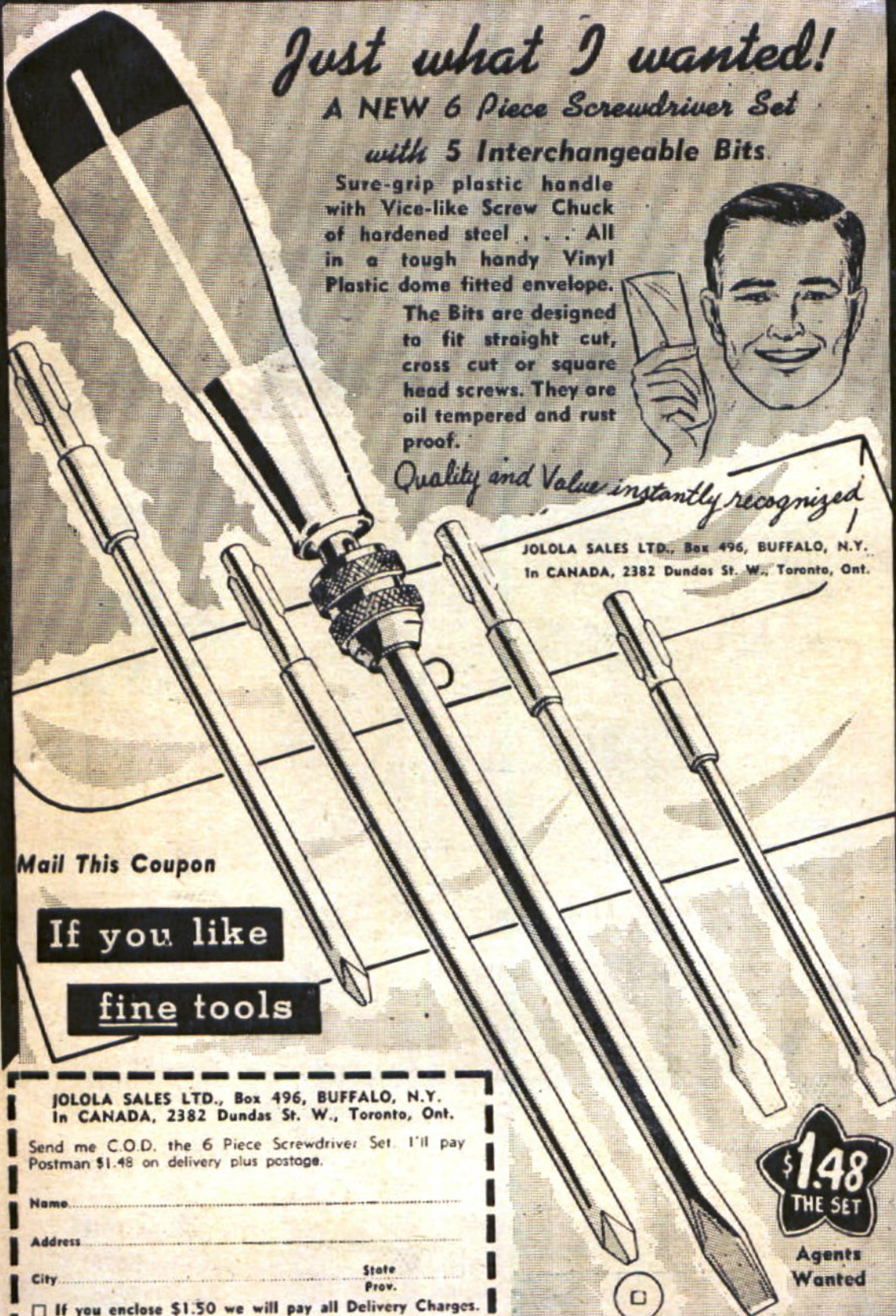
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